

25th Senate District 2011 Women of Distinction

SHAMEEDA ABDUL-MUMIN was nominated by the City of Los Angeles. She has a Master's of Business Administration from Woodbury University, a Bachelor of Science in Business Marketing from the University of Nevada Las Vegas and Certificate in Human Resource Management. She also holds her California Real Estate Broker's License and CA Notary. She is currently the Area Sales Manager for Coca Cola Refreshments where she manages the daily sales functions for the Los Angeles Market. Shameeda is a key component in the company's initiatives primarily focusing on product portfolio/well-being, education and community programs. In her spare time she volunteers with numerous youth organizations and mentor programs.

SHIRLEY ADRIAN was nominated by the City of Los Angeles. Shirley was born and raised in Dallas, Texas, and moved to Los Angeles to attend college. Shirley met and married her husband Pastor Richard Adrian in 1990 and continues to work together as one for the glory of God. In 2007, Shirley was ordained as a pastor, assisting her husband as the founders of the New Life Transformation Christian Center in Los Angeles. God has blessed Pastor Shirley to have a heart of compassion to help people. Pastor Shirley is co-founder and Executive Director of New Direction Community Programs, a community Drop-In and Food Distribution Center, which feeds the homeless and families in need.

ROWENA AKE was nominated by the City of Los Angeles. Rowena has been a resident of Westchester for 56 years, and has owned several businesses in Westchester since 1954. Rowena has under her belt, several firsts in the community. She was the first female president of the Westchester/LAX Coastal Chamber of Commerce in 1975, the first female member of the Westchester Rotary Club in 1987, and the first female president of that same club in 1995. Currently she is the president of the Flight Path Learning Center and Museum, on the Executive Board of the AERO Club of Southern California, a member of the Westchester Women's Club, and has been a Mayoral-Appointed Board Member of the Westchester Vitalization Committee since 1985.

BETTY BAILEY was nominated by the City of Lawndale. Betty moved to Lawndale after retiring from her position as a nurse at UCLA, and has been a resident of Lawndale for over 16 years. She has four children and one grandchild. Her passion for helping others did not stop after she retired; she continues to volunteer for many different groups. Currently she is an active member of the Senior Center Advisory Committee, and gives her time volunteering for special events or helping to promote quality programs for seniors. Betty is also a member of the Great Ebenezer Baptist Church, and with her senior group, she spends countless hours volunteering to visit sick people in the hospital. Her volunteer work with the Desoto High School Alumni Association has also benefited many young people with providing scholarships for college.

LENORE BEMIS was nominated by the City of Lawndale. She has lived in Lawndale for over 55 years, and is an active member of the community, well-known for her vibrant smile and cheerful demeanor. She retired from Hughes Aircraft, and spends much of her time volunteering in the South Bay. Of her volunteer activities, some of her favorites include the work she does with the S.S. Lane Victory, a national, historic landmark ship in San Pedro where she has worked on publicity since 1993, and assisting the community with the commodities program at the Lawndale Senior Center since 2008. She can be seen around the community volunteering at a variety of events including Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremonies, Santa Sleigh, Youth in Government Day, and the annual Lawndale Youth Parade. She has also volunteered with the Gardena Elks at the Long Beach Veterans Hospital from 1996-2002, assisting with Bingo Night and yearly Santa visits and gift distribution.

BETSY BIGGINS was nominated by the Palos Verdes Peninsula Coordinating Council. Betsy and her husband have lived on the Peninsula for 47 years and recently celebrated their 50th Wedding Anniversary. Retired after 31 years from Torrance Memorial Center, Betsy now spends most of her time actively in the community. Her accolades are: past president of the Palos Verdes Coordinating Council, past board member of Palos Verdes Chamber of Commerce, past board member of the Healthcare and Elder Law Programs Corporation (H.E.L.P.), past president of Peninsula Committee for Children's Hospital, past board member of the American Heart Association, and she is currently a member of the 4th of July Independence Day Committee and a member of Mission Committee at St. Peter's By The Sea Presbyterian Church.

BETTY DAY was nominated by the 52nd Assembly District. A native of Kilgore, Texas, Betty moved to Los Angeles in 1941, and graduated from David Starr Jordan High School. She worked for the Board of Education for 22 years at 102nd Elementary School, and retired in 1988. She has served the Watts Community as the Assistant Director of the Watts Towers Teen Post, as the Grape Street Block Club Captain for ten years, and worked at the Watts Labor Community Action Committee for five years, working specifically with the youth. She received five awards from the Department of Children Services for outstanding service to foster youth, and is a founding member and president of the Watts Gang Task Force, formed in 2006, which has been credited with reducing violent crime in the area by more than 50% in three years. She is also the vice president of the Watts Neighborhood Council, and a member of the Jordan Downs Redevelopment Community Advisory Committee.

CAROLYN FOWLER was nominated by the 51st Assembly District. A native of Detroit, Michigan, and now residing in Hawthorne, she attended Eastern Michigan University and the University of Michigan and holds a BA in Business Administration. She also completed the Wharton Global MBA International Certificate Program at Pennsylvania State University. Carolyn has provided consulting, training, meeting facilitation, focus groups, speaking and organizational development services to non-profits, corporations and public sector entities. She credits her accomplishments to the exceptional learning as a retired AT&T manager. She is currently the Chief Operation Officer for The Smiley Group, Inc., a communications corporation established in support of human rights and related empowerment issues. Active in the community, Carolyn is past president of the New Frontier Democratic Club, she is a Los Angeles County Democratic Party (LACDP) 51st Assembly District elected delegate, LACDP Election Board co-chair, formerly a California Democratic Party Rules Committee member, and a founding member of the California Election Protection Network.

MARILUISE J. HUFF was nominated by the Palos Verdes Woman's Club. She is a registered nurse, a nurse practitioner and a mother of six. Always first to volunteer, Marilouise was an emergency nurse at the Olympic Games, and is a member of the Board of the American Red Cross. She serves on many other boards including the Board of Directors of the Peninsula Friends of the Library, and is serving as secretary on the Board of Directors of Health View Inc., a non-profit. She is also currently the Bulletin Editor and Chairman of the Palos Verdes Woman's Club Spring Garden Tour Fundraiser.

ARVIS JONES was nominated by the City of Los Angeles. Arvis is currently the Assistant Director of The Center for Grief and Loss for Children, a program of Hathaway-Sycamores Child and Family Services where she helps to provide a supportive environment for families who are experiencing loss and grief. She provides grief and loss training for therapists, clinicians, teachers, after-school personnel, clergy, parents, and volunteers. Arvis has a Bachelor's Degree from California State University Long Beach with a Music Therapy Certificate. She is a national board member of The National Association of Negro Musicians (NANM), a member of Musicians In Action (MIA), a member of the American Music Therapy Association (AMTA), and a member of the Top Ladies of Distinction (TLOD), where she is the top teen advisor of the Los Angeles Chapter of TLOD. Arvis says her efforts are part of a commitment that goes beyond the initial strain that comes with the sudden loss of a loved one.

KATRINA MANNING was nominated by the City of Hawthorne. Katrina is a wife, working mother, a proud community activist, and a resident of Hawthorne for 20 years. Shortly after moving to Hawthorne, she got involved in the Holly Park Homeowners Association and currently serves as vice president. Notable achievements include, but not limited to, founder of City of Hawthorne Annual Movies in the Park, coordinator of the annual Holly Park National Night Out, and organized the Holly Park community to participate in the city's Unity 3 on 3 Basketball Tournament. Katrina is a regular attendee at city council and other meetings, and helps keep her neighbors informed about what is going on in the community. She serves as Block Captain, Teen Center mentor and a South Bay One Stop volunteer. Katrina has tirelessly worked to improve the quality of life for children, young adults, and adults in the City of Hawthorne.

EMILY MARSHALL was nominated by the City of Compton. Emily has been actively involved in serving the youth and community of Compton for over 40 years. She participated in the PTA at Caldwell Street Elementary School, and ran an after-school program in the 70's, well before after-school care and day care became readily accessible. She became a teacher's aide in the Compton Unified School District and was a great asset to the school library and administration. After she retired, she began

working tirelessly in the community and the church alongside her husband as the First Lady to Pastor Milton Marshall Jr., of Full Life Missionary Baptist Church in Long Beach, where she continues to serve.

KATHLEEN MCGOWAN, P.E was nominated by the City of Rolling Hills Estates. Kathleen and her husband, Al, have lived in Rolling Hills Estates since 1995 when they relocated from Atlanta. She became involved in the community through parent participation at Cornerstone Elementary School and also served as part-time Executive Director of the Palos Verdes Peninsula Land Conservancy during its early days. Kathleen is a member of the California Stormwater Quality Association and serves on its Watershed Management and Impaired Waters subcommittee. Kathleen's professional experience spans more than 20 years of technical and regulatory work in environmental compliance, stormwater pollution prevention, industrial and hazardous waste management for a variety of public and private clients. She earned a B.S. in Chemical Engineering from the Johns Hopkins University, an M.S. in Environmental Engineering from Georgia Tech and is licensed as a Chemical Engineer in the State of California. Kathleen currently serves on the Palos Verdes Landfill Citizens Advisory Committee as the City of Rolling Hills Estates' citizen representative. She is a Boy Scout Merit Badge Counselor and serves on the executive committee of Boy Scout Troop 128--the Navigators as the Troop Administrator. Kathleen makes herself available to Girl Scouts as well.

YOLANDA MEDRANO was nominated by the City of Long Beach. Yolanda is the owner of Necho's, a restaurant in West Long Beach. In her short time operating in Long Beach, she has taken a leadership role. She has made her business available for community gatherings and has catered food, at no cost, for community events, including Summer Night Lights at the West Long Beach Boys and Girls Club. She is an active member of St. Lucy's Church and the West Long Beach Association. She is passionate and concerned about her community and is diligent in making West Long Beach and the entire city a better place to live.

JULIA PARTON was nominated by the Palos Verdes Peninsula Rotary. As described, "Julia defines the meaning of community service, and her leadership is by example." She has served in leadership positions in more than a dozen organizations on the Peninsula and in the South Bay, including as a past board member of the Palos Verdes Chamber of Commerce, and the Healthcare and Elder Law Programs Corporation (H.E.L.P.). Currently, she is the president of the Palos Verdes Junior Women's Club, and of the Palos Verdes Peninsula Coordination Council, and is a 14-year member, and current board member of the Rotary Club of the Palos Verdes Peninsula, where she has also served as president, secretary, treasurer, and chaired all seven of the club's committees.

NAOMI RAINEY was nominated by the Cal State University Long Beach NAACP College Chapter. A native of Aberdeen, Mississippi, she moved to California at the age of 14. She has earned a Bachelor of Arts Degree, two Master's Degrees, and seven teaching credentials at California State University Long Beach. Today, Naomi is the president of the Long Beach Branch of the NAACP and secretary of the California State NAACP. She is a sought-after motivational and educational speaker because she challenges the system as well as the youth to be responsible and responsive as they seek to reach their goals and objectives in life. She has received many special recognitions awards such as the Los Angeles County Human Relations Award, the KTLA/Channel 5 "Hero of the Week", and the Community Service Award from both the cities of Compton and Long Beach.

MARGARET REED was nominated by the City of Compton. Margaret is a long-time resident of Compton, she and her late husband, Frank, moved to the City of Compton in 1950 and raised 5 children. Before retiring, she worked for the Los Angeles Police Department and the Los Angeles County Superintendent of Schools. Margaret has been involved in a wide variety of volunteer activities. Most notably, she is the founder of the Hub City (Compton) Chapter of the Top Ladies of Distinction (TLOD). TLOD is a national organization comprised of women who dedicate themselves to service in their communities. Since the establishment of the Chapter, Margaret has held offices at the national, regional and local levels. She is also a lifetime member of the National Council of Negro Women.

SHIRLEY RUDOLPH was nominated by the City of Lawndale. Since 1991, Shirley has served as a board member, clerk, and president of the Board of Education for the Lawndale Elementary School District. She brings her care and concern for the well-being of each and every student directly to the decisions she is called to make. Shirley has dedicated over 40 years to the Lawndale Little League, works as an advisor to the Lawndale High School Key Club, serves as the secretary to the Kiwanis Club, and has

also served the city on the Parks, Recreation and Social Services Commission for over 12 years. The youth are truly the heart and soul of Shirley Rudolph.

MARION RUTH was nominated by the City of Rolling Hills. Marion is highly engaged in Rolling Hills and the Peninsula. In Rolling Hills, she is active in the Women's Community Club, and Tennis Club, having served as the president of both organizations. In the Peninsula community, she was a founding member of the Peninsula Education Foundation, is active in the Caballeros del Rancho Palos Verdes, and is a sustaining member of the Palos Verdes Peninsula Chapter of the Nations Charity League, and was instrumental in the creation of the Chapter's Thrift Shop in San Pedro. Marion also serves on the Board of Directors for the Blind Children's Center and the Peninsula Symphony; teaches Sunday School at Rolling Hills Covenant Church, and has been involved in the Palos Verdes Peninsula Land Conservancy.

SHARON RYAN was nominated by the Palos Verdes Peninsula Chamber of Commerce. In addition to owning her own travel agency, An Uncommon Journey, for over 20 years and raising a family, Sharon has always made community service a major priority in her life. She has served the community as a founding member of the Palos Verdes Art Center's Associates group, where she was the president and fundraising chair for nine years and recipient of their Lifetime Volunteer Award, she was a board member and founding member of The Volunteer Center – South Bay's Affinity Group, where she has served as president and fundraising chair, and Chair of the Palos Verdes Peninsula Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors. She was also the past president and Regional award winner for Soroptimist International Palos Verdes-San Pedro, past board member of the Palos Verdes Art Center for 25 years, and was a board member and co-president of the Palos Verdes Estates Neighborhood Watch for 20 years. Currently, she is a board member and fundraising chair for the Healthcare and Elder Law Programs Corporation (H.E.L.P.).

BARBARA SEARCY was nominated by the City of Inglewood. Barbara is the Principal of Monroe Middle School, where she has served in various capacities for the past 38 years. Putting children first is her mission, and she endeavors to equip young men and women to be model citizens by incorporating a balance of support from both the home and school. Her leadership style is forthright and decisive and she has an ability to build successful partnerships which have been her career trademark. Monroe Middle School's numerous successes in Mathematics, Engineering, Science Achievement (MESA) Competitions, Spelling Bees, Science Fairs, and the most recent 41-point gain on the California Standards test are all a testament of her leadership. Barbara is also active in her sorority, Zeta Phi Beta, and has served on various committees and held several offices.

PAULETTE SIMPSON-GIPSON was nominated by the Compton NAACP. Paulette has been a member of the Compton community for over 15 years. She has been a minister for the past 15 years at Christ First Baptist Church in the City of Compton. She is President of SEIU Western Region African American Caucus (AFRAM), and has been employed by the Torrance School District for 19 years. She fights for those who have no voice; however, her true passion is preaching the Gospel and serving God. Paulette and her husband, James Gipson, have shared 24 wonderful years together. They have 3 children, and 4 grandchildren. In its 100th year Paulette was sworn-in as the first woman president of the Compton Branch of the NAACP. She was re-elected for office of president of the Compton Branch in November 2010. She will proudly wear this honor as she continues to serve her community in the spirit of excellence.

CONNIE TURNER was nominated by the Gardena Valley Chamber of Commerce. Connie is a Regional Manager in Public Affairs with Southern California Edison. She recently completed both the UCLA Anderson Graduate School of Management Executive Program and UCLA's Managerial Negotiations Program. She holds a Bachelor's and Master's Degree in Business Administration, and completed the Project Management Certificate Program at Caltech and Boston College's Certificate in Corporate Community Involvement as well. Connie serves on the board of several African American organizations such as the Long Beach NAACP, Compton NAACP, Lynwood Athletics and Community Services, Academic UpRise, and the Grassroots Community Network, and participates in youth awareness programs by volunteering her time to deliver presentations to various youth and school venues. She is also an active member of the Compton, Carson, and Gardena Chambers of Commerce and her sorority, Zeta Phi Beta.

OLIVIA VALENTINE was nominated by the City of Hawthorne. Olivia has been actively involved in the Hawthorne community since 2004. She was voted president of the Holly Park Homeowners Association from 2006-2007 and 2010-2011, and served her community and neighborhood as a Block Watch Captain and organizer for the Neighborhood Watch Program. She has served on the Hawthorne Planning Commission and was known as a dedicated commissioner who listened to residents and developers alike while weighing her decisions on what was best for the community. She was a champion for the implementation of smart mixed-use projects. For 19 years, Olivia served as an attorney for the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), and founded the FAA's local Adopt-A-School program which exposes hundreds of children to the aviation industry. Olivia currently is an adjunct professor and represents the City of Hawthorne on the LAX Advisory Board.